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RECONSTRUCTION OF TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES
IN THE GDANSK-GDYNIA COMPLEX

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Since the activities of Gdynia and Gdansk are closely related, the two port cities should be one economic unit. As these cities stretch along a narrow 30-kilometer strip of coastline, economic unification cannot be achieved without rebuilding and extending the existing lanes of communication.

In addition to the local railroads and the through railroads which have been reactivated, the natural means of communication are: (1) State Highway No I, the only highway between Gdansk and Gdynia, with the bridges and viaducts along its route; (2) electric streetcar, trolley-bus, and motorbus lines; (3) coastal navigation; (4) other main roads connecting the business sections of Gdansk and Gdynia with the ports, workers' residential developments, and the rest of the country.

The best possible means of communication had to be established to the distant sections of the cities which were occupied by the working masses who supplied labor for the ports, the enterprises, and the service institutions. The extensive building activities in the demolished cities of Gdansk, Sopot, and Gdynia required thousands of laborers and technicians, who sought housing in suburbs and communities which were relatively intact but distant from their place of employment.

The original unplanned distribution of administrative offices, establishments, and institutions in all these cities also greatly increased passenger traffic and transportation difficulties. Streetcars, motorbuses, and railroad cars were inadequate, and war damage to roads, bridges, and electric power facilities was immense.

Continuous passenger traffic throughout the day is characteristic of Gdansk and Gdynia, with the heaviest traffic in the early morning hours and in the afternoon. This incessant traffic is explained by the fact that many persons working in one city of necessity live in the other city, and institutions and offices which must communicate with one another are scattered throughout the area.

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The MZKGG (Interurban Communication Enterprises, Gdynia-Gdansk) carried about 5,245,000 passengers in 1945, 37,180,000 in 1946, 45,163,000 in 1947, and 52,500,000 in the first 9 months of 1948. In 1945, the monthly average was 750,000 passengers, with a vehicle park of three streetcars and one trailer; in 1946, 3 million passengers with 14 streetcars with three trailers, 14 motorbusses, and ten trolley busses operating as of 1 January 1946; in 1947, 3,800,000 passengers, with 50 streetcars with 36 trailers, 36 motorbusses, and 15 trolley busses operating; in 1948, 5,800,000 passengers, with 69 streetcars with 63 trailers, 25 motorbusses, and 16 trolley busses with 10 trailers operating as of 1 October 1948.

The present population of the Gdansk area is about 173,000. The average number of passengers carried monthly is 2,700,000, with 3,300,000 in the summer months. This means that an average of two trips are made daily by every inhabitant. In addition to the MZKGG, thousands of passenger and service cars and trucks also carry passengers, and trains leave every 30 minutes.

GDO Participation in Rebuilding Local Transportation

From its formation in 1945, the GDO (Gdansk Bureau of Reconstruction) has given first priority to the rebuilding of demolished streets, bridges, viaducts, and transportation facilities in Gdansk, Sopot, and Gdynia.

It was estimated that for 500 kilometers of roads the damage averaged 25 percent, and damage to the 60 or more larger bridges and viaducts was at least 50 percent. Hardly a bridge, especially in the Gdansk area, could carry traffic safely until it was reinforced. Almost half of all the bridges were entirely destroyed. There are 90 kilometers of streetcar tracks in Gdansk, calculated on the basis of single track, and 15 kilometers of double trolley-bus lines in the Gdynia area. Damage to the overhead network averaged 40 percent. Two of the eight substations were totally destroyed, and destruction of streetcar tracks averaged from 10 to 15 percent. It was estimated that about 110 streetcars with 110 trailers, 60 motorbusses, and 29 trolley busses with 16 trailers, all left by the Germans, could be rehabilitated. There were many types of cars, and damage averaged 50 percent. There was a shortage of spare parts, trolley wires, and tires for trolley busses.

It was decided to repair the Gdansk-Gdynia Highway, to repair all the more important approaches to the ports, and to reactivate the existing electric transportation facilities in the Gdansk and Gdynia area. There was no electric transportation in Sopot at that time.

The cost of rebuilding as outlined was enormous and out of proportion to the financial resources. Nevertheless, the cost of each kilometer of railroad track or road, every bridge, streetcar, or trolley bus rebuilt or repaired in 1945 - 1946 was from five to six times less than today. For example, the cost of the complete repair of one trolley bus, including tires and the rebuilding of the electrical and mechanical parts, was 200,000 zlotys, while today it is more than 1,200,000 zlotys.

A detailed account of GDO expenditures on transportation projects is given in an article by Dunin and Kurcewicz in this issue [available in CIA].

Review of GDO Work in Rebuilding Transportation

In 1945 and the beginning of 1946, the GDO, despite the small credits allotted, started to rebuild State Highway No I. The antitank concrete blocks were removed, the drains were cleaned, and the road was resurfaced for about 20 kilometers.

The steel viaduct at the Brama Oliwska (Oliwska Gate) over the railroad tracks at the exit to Aleja Rokossowskiego in Gdansk was rebuilt. It is of steel construction with a three-bay arch, about 80 meters long. The cost of rebuilding was 1,400,000 zlotys. Two bridges connecting the city with Olowianka Island, on which

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an active power plant was located, were rebuilt. In fall 1945, with the aid of the Technical Division of the Municipal Administration of Gdansk, all the bridges were inspected to determine the importance of each and the extent of war damage.

Estimates and detailed plans for the rebuilding of the trolley-bus line in Gdynia also were made. In addition, the Municipal Transportation Administration of Gdansk received 3,500,000 zlotys to activate the main Gdansk-Oliwa streetcar line; the Gdansk-Nowy Port line, and part of the Orunska line. Of the 90 kilometers of existing streetcar lines, about 35 kilometers calculated on the basis of single track, were reactivated. The cost of rebuilding averaged about 150,000 zlotys per kilometer.

In January 1946, the rebuilding of a 2-kilometer section of the double trolley-bus line running from the center of Gdynia to the trolley-bus garage at Waszyngtona Street was started.

Work was also begun on repairs to the first ten former German trolley busses of the Henschel type and on the repair and activation of the transformer substation supplying the Station Line. This line was activated on 19 March 1946 with the aid of the Municipal Transportation Administration of Gdynia. Total cost of these repairs was 3,700,000 zlotys. More than 40 percent of the lines had been destroyed, and damage to cars was even greater.

In April 1946, the rebuilding of the 12 kilometers of double-track trolley-bus line to Orlowo and Chylonia was started. Two transformer substations, Redlowo and Grabowski, were reactivated. The cost was about 6,500,000 zlotys. The Orlowo Line was opened on 27 June 1946 and the Chylonia Line on 2 October 1946.

During this time five new trolleybuses also were repaired -- three large Fiat busses, one small Henschel, and one small Mercedes.

At this time about 54,000 meters of copper trolley wire were received from Sweden as a gift through the Swedish consulate. This gift was very valuable since domestic factories were just beginning to organize production at this time. About 39,000 meters more were supplied later by domestic factories. Some of the wire was used for the Sopot-Orlowo trolley-bus line and the Oliwa-Jelitkowo. Gdansk-Brzezno-Nowy Port, and Oliwa-Sopot streetcar lines. The last, 3 kilometers long, was started by the Municipal Transportation Administration of Gdynia-Gdansk in June 1946 and completed in fall 1946 at a cost of more than 13 million zlotys.

The MZKGG and government agencies undertook the repair of streetcars and motorbuses on a larger scale. Although the shortage of spare parts affected the speed and quality of repairs, about 100 cars were repaired within a year.

In June 1946, the GDO started to build the 4.5-kilometer Orlowo-Sopot trolley-bus line and two new transformer substations to serve Sopot I and Sopot II. These substations, together with the existing ones, were to supply power for the entire network of streetcar and trolley-bus lines to Sopot, Orlowo, Witomina, and Oksywie; a schedule of a car running every 5 minutes was planned. These plans have not been realized for lack of credits. Eventually, however, these distant communities, which are densely populated by workers, must receive adequate modern transportation. Present temporary transportation facilities are most unsatisfactory.

In January 1947, the last trolley-bus line, Orlowo-Sopot, was activated, connecting Gdynia with Gdansk. The GDO then turned its entire attention to the Gdynia-Gdansk highway. Simultaneously, repairs were started on 50 bridges at the most important approaches to Gdansk. The first step was to put in order the main road to Elblag within the city limits of Gdansk by completing Długa Street and rebuilding the Stagienny and Zielony bridges which span tributary streams of the Moltawa River. To connect Gdansk with the workers' development in Sianki, the steel Siennicki Bridge over the Wisla River had to be restored. By 1 May 1948, the three bridges were opened to traffic. Because of the varied construction of

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these bridges, all bascule type, and because of raw material shortages, it cost 24 million zlotys to restore the Zielcny and Siennicki bridges and to reinforce the Stagiwny Bridge. The combined length of the three bridges is 130 meters.

The more important bridges still requiring repairs are the viaduct on Kosciuszko Street, the Bialowieski Bridge opposite the Wojewodztwo Administration Building in Gdansk, and the Radunski, Brzegi, and Grobla Kamienna bridges. These bridges could be rebuilt within a year if credits of 40 - 50 million zlotys were available.

The plans for greater Gdansk call for several new bridges in connection with the cutting of new streets. Two bridges over the Moltawa on the extended Podwale-Przedmiejskie Street and on Nowy Swiat Street are urgently needed to establish normal vehicular and streetcar service.

In spring 1948, the GDO continued the rebuilding of Grunwaldzka Street in Wrzeszcz, which had been started much earlier by the Gdansk Municipal Administration.

During the 1947 - 1948 winter, wrecking operations involving about 25,000 cubic meters of masonry and yielding over a million bricks were carried out at a cost of 15 million zlotys. In May 1948, with the aid of the Service for Poland youth organization, work was started on the 1.2-kilometer section from Miodowa Street to Lendziona Street. This was completed at a cost of 16 million zlotys.

At present preparatory and surfacing work is in progress on a 0.7-kilometer stretch in the direction of Oliwa and on a large reinforced-concrete culvert 8 meters long over Bystrzec Creek. This work will cost about 12 million zlotys.

The plan will not be completed until the entire Gdansk-Gdynia road is widened along the 14-kilometer stretch from Aleje Rokossowskiego in Wrzeszcz to the present dual highway in Orlowo. The GDO completed rebuilding of the narrowest section of the road, which is 4 kilometers long from the "viaduct of death" in Sopot to the dual highway in Orlowo. The building of this section of the road was started on 5 May 1948 with the aid of the Service for Poland Organization. The middle section, from Sopot to Oliwa will be completed during the 1948 - 1949 winter and the balance of the 14-kilometer stretch by spring 1949, provided appropriations of at least 150 million zlotys are forthcoming.

The Sopot Viaduct, at the point where the railroad crosses this highway, will connect with the extension of Stalina Street in Sopot. The Viaduct will cross the railroad tracks at an angle of 31 degrees. It will be of reinforced concrete, 45 meters long, with several trusses. The road will be 12 meters wide, and there will be two sidewalks each 2.8 meters wide, bicycle path included.

The highway will be a dual highway, each lane 8.5 meters wide, separated by a landscaped island 5 meters wide. This section of the highway is planned according to motor highway requirements, since it will meet the proposed new Red Highway at a point near the viaduct. Specifications are: minimum horizontal curve 300 meters, maximum grade 3 percent, minimum grade curve 3,000 meters.

The cost of the Sopot Viaduct will be 25-35 million zlotys. The average cost of one kilometer of modern concrete surfacing over crushed stone will be about 35 million zlotys. The cost of the section on Grunwaldzka Street in Wrzeszcz will be greater because of sewer construction there.

The total cost of the 14-kilometer road and the Sopot Viaduct will be 800 million zlotys.

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The widening of this road is imperative for the heterogeneous traffic of motorbusses, trolley busses, trucks, passenger cars, wagons, motorcycles, and bicycles. The old Sopot Viaduct will have to be replaced eventually by a modern one large enough to span at least four electric railroad tracks.

A general plan has been worked out for a motor highway and promenade along the seacoast, to be known as the Green Highway. This is the shortest route -- about 4.5 kilometers -- between Gdynia and Nowy Port in Gdansk. It would be an invaluable tourist attraction and would relieve the heavy traffic in the direction of Nowy Port on the main highway. A temporary surface over a foundation of rubble would cost 8 to 10 million zlotys per kilometer.

An organized wrecking program was undertaken by the GDO in 1947 - 1948 with funds from the Ministry of Labor and Public Welfare, and from 1 January to 30 May 1948 with funds from the Ministry of Reconstruction. The cost of the program was about 125 million zlotys. About 100,000 cubic meters of masonry were cleared in the city of Gdansk. More than 8 million bricks were reclaimed, 95 percent of which were usable. More than 800 tons of iron were reclaimed, half of which can be used for building purposes. More than 1,500 persons were employed. A section of the Gdansk-Warsaw road was to be straightened and widened. In Gdansk this road will run over Trzeciego Maja Street along the railroad tracks and then connect with the old road.

This resume covers the activities of only one branch of the GDO in the 3 years of its existence. Despite difficult conditions, results are very satisfactory.

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